UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

ACC

Administrative Committee on Coordination

ACC/1993/9
8 June 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN

(Vienna, 15-16 March 1993)

SUMMARY

The main work of the seventeenth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women centred on the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Major items were the discussions of the Platform for Action and the second review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women which should have an impact for women at the national, regional and international levels. It was suggested that issues such as accountability and sustainable development be included in the draft platform for action for the Fourth World Conference. The proposed information programme for the World Conference was reviewed. A joint statement on the preparation of the World Conference was prepared for delivery to the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (annex III). Comments were made on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women and a proposal was put forward to the Administrative Committee on Coordination concerning medium-term planning. The preparation of the reports on the priority themes for the Commission on the Status of Women (1994 and 1995) and preparations for the General Assembly report on monitoring the Forward-looking Strategies were discussed.

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1	3
I.	MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION	2 - 4	3
II.	SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION	5	3
III.	REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES	6 - 7	4
IV.	PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE	8 - 13	4
V.	OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES	14 - 15	6
VI.	PREPARATION OF REPORTS	16 - 18	6
VII.	OTHER MATTERS	19	7
VIII.	ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN	20	7

Annexes

I.	AGENDA FOR THE SEVENTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN	8
II.	LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	9
III.	JOINT STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN TO THE THIRTY-SEVENTY SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN	12
IV.	PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN	17

INTRODUCTION

1. The seventeenth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women was held at Vienna, 15-16 March 1993, prior to the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The agenda for the meeting and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II, respectively.

I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION

Recommendations

2. With regard to the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, it is recommended that the United Nations system consider the establishment of a new kind of mechanism which would allow system-wide planning that is more dynamic and flexible with a shorter time period and would serve as a more useful instrument for coordination within the system.

3. The approach and procedures adopted for operational activities within the United Nations system are undergoing significant changes, the most important of which are the shift from project to programme approach of both activities financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and multi-bilaterally financed activities, as well as the new procedures for technical cooperation financed by UNDP, including national implementation and execution. Therefore, there is a need to build a common strategy among United Nations agencies involved in operational activities, in order to ensure that the gender dimension is fully reflected in the country strategy and that all specialized agencies are involved in its implementation in their respective fields of competence.

4. The inter-agency and regional mechanisms should be strengthened at the country level for the purpose of data and information sharing and coordination of activities. Multi-bilateral donors should be included in this mechanism.

II. SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION

5. The preliminary draft of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women was discussed by participants. The usefulness of spending enormous amounts of time on a detailed indicative system-wide medium-term plan and the relevance of its implementation was questioned. There was a general feeling that it was difficult to plan eight years ahead at a time when the world was undergoing rapid changes. It was suggested that a system-wide plan covering a shorter period, such as two years, dealing with broader strategic issues, would be more appropriate at that time. A planning exercise of a flexible, rolling and adjustable character would respond well to the new world dynamics. It was agreed that comments on the system-wide medium-term plan would be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council Affairs and Inter-Agency Coordination Division in New York by 31 March 1993, so that a revised draft could be prepared for submission to the Administrative Committee on Coordination in April 1993.

III. REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES

6. On the basis of previous experience, the presentation stressed the need to introduce innovations in the second review and appraisal. It was stressed that countries should see the review and appraisal as a continuous process involving the setting of national goals and the development of means to measure progress in attaining them. It was also proposed to use indicators, stressing the measurement of changes over time. Exchange of information between national, regional and international levels should be ensured, in order to avoid contradictions. In order to insert the national reports in the regional reports, Member States should be encouraged to start the review and appraisal as soon as possible and send national reports to the regional commissions. Broad and open participation in the process of preparation would be a fundamental step for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The review and appraisal would also provide the opportunity to provide examples of successful activities which might be used in preparing the Platform for Action. The role of regional preparatory conferences in the process of review and appraisal was highlighted.

7. The following consensus emerged in the discussion: on the one hand the suggested list of indicators, which was an indicative one, should be streamlined on the basis of degree of relevance to the review and appraisal process, while on the other hand indicators on issues such as poverty and environment should be developed. Attempts should also be made to measure performance in areas such as decision-making, as well as the impact of national machineries. To avoid overloading the national statistical offices and specialized offices (for example, in the area of refugees), it was necessary to distinguish between a basic set of available data and the supplementary set of data based on available surveys. In order to integrate national reports into regional and international reports it was suggested that Member States should respect the deadlines for submitting national reports to regional commissions and the Division for the Advancement of Women. In the preparation of their reports, Member States could establish national priorities. To avoid duplication of efforts, the meeting proposed to keep a current information flow between the members of the United Nations system concerning the data available, any new data collected through the regional commissions and the coordination of assistance to be provided to Member States in the preparation of national reports.

IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

8. With regard to the format and purpose of the Platform for Action, the meeting agreed that it should be concise and easily understandable, since it should be a manifesto for the women of the world as well as for the decision makers. It was felt that Agenda 21 and the outcomes of other international conferences to be held before 1995 should be mentioned and links should also be made to other international agreements. Regional proposals should also be taken into account. The absence of an accountability factor in the report was noted and there was some discussion about what workable arrangements could be made.

It was agreed that Conference goals should not merely be measurable but should also be measured.

9. It was suggested that the preamble and the question of accountability be discussed at the regional level during the preparatory process, in order to achieve consensus before the Conference. The meeting found that Conference goals should be divided into strategic goals and the practical needs whose fulfilment would ultimately lead to the attainment of those goals. A joint statement on the preparation of the Fourth World Conference on Women was prepared for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (annex III).

10. The meeting felt the need for a comprehensive information strategy. Regarding a public information campaign, the meeting found that it would be important to go beyond the purview of the Department of Public Information, which operated within a restricted budget, and make use of the private sector and non-governmental organizations. It was noted that much could be learned from the successful information campaign for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the plans for the International Conference on Population and Development. For the Conference to be effective, it would be critical to reach communities at the grass-roots level as well as to mobilize mass media, make optimal use of modern technology and use and strengthen all existing networks. It was suggested that a media expert (financed with extrabudgetary funding to be identified) be sought to advise and assist the Conference secretariat on successful implementation of the strategy. It was also felt that the work of the Department of Public Information should interrelate with outside communication networks.

11. The meeting also discussed the preliminary version of the updated World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. The World Survey was a joint effort of the United Nations Secretariat and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and it would be one of the principal documents for the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The participants approved the extended outline of the preliminary version of the World Survey and concentrated mainly on setting the final distribution of responsibilities and defining the lead agencies for specific chapters. Participants agreed that the lead agencies would present final substantive contributions by 1 November 1993; cooperating organizations would do so by 1 September 1993.

12. Concerning the preparation of the report on existing technical and financial cooperation as one preparatory activity for the Fourth World Conference (see resolution 35/4, para. 4, of the Commission on the Status of Women), it was proposed that the question be taken up by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, Subcommittee on Women and Development, since that Group was an Inter-agency forum more concerned with operational activities.

13. The Inter-agency Meeting welcomed the initiative of the World Bank to elaborate a policy paper on women in development. It was noted that the Bank had invited the United Nations system, intergovernmental bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations to provide inputs to the draft paper and planned to discuss those inputs at a seminar in November 1993.

V. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

14. Participants shared information on ongoing and upcoming technical cooperation activities and the incorporation of a gender dimension. Some agencies expressed their concern over the changes of approach and procedures adopted for technical cooperation activities. The shift from project to programme approach had made it increasingly difficult to include a gender dimension in the mainstream of operational activities under the auspices of technical cooperation.

15. It was felt that there was a lack of collaboration among the agencies, especially in the area of statistical information. Participants suggested establishing a mechanism to share information on activities undertaken by the United Nations system and specialized agencies, in order to improve collaboration in gathering statistical information, enhance cooperation and eliminate duplication.

VI. PREPARATION OF REPORTS

A. Preparation of reports on the priority themes for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women

16. Participants took note of the approach proposed for the preparation of reports on the priority themes for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1993/CRP.1). The priority theme under "Equality" would be "Equal pay for work of equal value, including methodologies for measurement of pay inequities and work in the informal sector". The priority theme under "Peace" would be "Measures to eradicate violence against women", and the report to the Commission on the Status of Women would be based on the report of an expert group meeting on that subject, scheduled for 13-17 September 1993. The priority theme under "Development" would be "Women in urban areas: population, nutrition and health factors for women in development, including migration, drug consumption and AIDS", and an expert group meeting on that subject would be convened from 8-12 November 1993, if extrabudgetary funds were available. The aide-mémoire was distributed to participants. The agencies expressed their interest in contributing to preparations for the themes by providing material on their activities and experiences and by actively participating in the expert group meetings.

B. Preparation of reports on the priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women

17. The meeting was informed that the proposed outlines for the priority themes for presentation to the Commission in 1995 would be presented in a conference room paper at the next session. Any inputs on the themes listed should be forwarded to the Division for the Advancement of Women.

C. Preparations for the General Assembly report on the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies

18. The organizations took note of the proposed method of preparation and agreed to forward their contributions to the Division for the Advancement of Women by the deadline of 15 May 1993. Comments on the first draft of the report, which would be circulated by 15 June 1993, should reach the Division by 13 July 1993.

VII. OTHER MATTERS

19. Participants of the Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women paid tribute to the work of Ms. Chafika Meslem as Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women and Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting over the previous 10 years.

VIII. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN

20. It was agreed that the eighteenth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting would take place prior to the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 1994. Annex IV contains the proposed agenda for the eighteenth session.

Annex I

AGENDA FOR THE SEVENTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN

1. Opening of the meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Programming and coordination matters related to the United Nations and United Nations system.

4. Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.

5. (a) Input to reports for priority themes for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women:

   (i) Equality: equal pay for work of equal value, including methodologies for measurement of pay inequities and work in the informal sector;

   (ii) Development: women in urban areas: population, nutrition and health factors for women in development, including migration, drug consumption and AIDS;

   (iii) Peace: measures to eradicate violence against women;

   (b) Preparation of the report on priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women:

   (i) Equality: equality in economic decision-making;

   (ii) Development: promotion of literacy, education and training, including technological skills;

   (iii) Peace: women in international decision-making;

   (c) Preparations for General Assembly report on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

6. Report on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

7. Operational activities.

8. Other matters.

9. Adoption of the report.

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

United Nations

Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	Mr. Sarbuland Khan
Department of Economic and Social Development	Ms. Joann Vanek
Department of Public Information	Ms. Erica Meltzer
Centre for Human Rights	Ms Yolande Diallo
United Nations Office at Vienna Division for the Advancement of Women	Ms. Gertrude Mongella (Secretary-General, Fourth World Conference on Women) Ms. Chafika Meslem (Director) Mr. John Mathiason Ms. Maria Hartl (Secretary) Mr. Jacques du Guerny Ms. Magaly Roman-Martinez Ms. Natalia Zakharova Ms. Philomena Kintu Ms. Herta Kaschitz Ms. Susan Mlango Ms. Elizabeth Sjöberg Ms. Semia Guermas Ms. Annie Tanmizi Ms. Kashfia Mansur Ms. Armelle Domenach Ms. Marlene Mannas
Social Development Division	Ms. Isabel Calvert
Secretariat for the International Year of the Family	Mr. George A. Puthuppally
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch	Mr. Kurt Neudek Ms. Antoineete D. Viccica
Drug Control Programme	Mr. Vladimir Fenopetov Ms. Juliette Boog
Economic Commission for Europe	Ms. Cynthia Day Wallace
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	Ms. Meena Patel

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Ms. Miriam Krawczyk
Economic Commission for Africa	Ms. Mebo Mwaniki
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Ms. Amina Adam
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements	Ms. Catalina Trujillo
United Nations Environment Programme	Ms. Andrea Matte-Baker
United Nations Children's Fund	Ms. Misrak Elias Ms. Sreelakshmi Gururaja
United Nations Development Programme	Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga-Okwenja
United Nations Volunteers	Ms. Jean Anglin
United Nations Development Fund for Women	Ms. Sharon Capeling-Alakija Ms. Beti Astolfi
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Ms. Ann M. Howarth
United Nations Population Fund	Ms. Catherine S. Pierce
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Ms. Najwa Kefaya
International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women	Ms. Margaret Shields
World Food Programme	Ms. Mona Hamman
<u>Specialized agencies</u>	
International Labour Organisation	Ms. Maria Angelica Ducci de Santa Cruz
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Ms. Leena M. Kirjavainen
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Ms. Alya Saada
World Health Organization	Dr. Tomris Türmen Dr. Lee-Nah Hsu Ms. Priscilla Alexander
World Bank	Ms. Carolyn Winter
International Maritime Organization	Ms. Pamela Tansey

International Fund for Agricultural Development	Mr. Muntasir Labban
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Ms. Bärbel Chambalu
International Atomic Energy Agency	Ms. Fran Wright
International Trade Centre	Ms. Ingrid I. Vanore-Speer

Annex III

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN TO THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The representatives of the 28 organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, in presenting this statement, would like to begin by acknowledging the contribution of Ms. Chafika Meslem to the cause of women over many years and by wishing her the very best in her future endeavours, in the knowledge that, in whatever challenge she undertakes, women will have a formidable ally.

Working together in a spirit of cooperation, the United Nations organizations and specialized agencies represented here recommend that the Platform for Action should focus on the critical issues that will set in motion and ensure in the long term the shaping and implementation of a gender-sensitive development strategy.

The new ethic of this strategy for development must set as its primary objective the improvement of the quality of life of the whole population. This implies balancing economic and social aims, reconciling growth with equity and underscoring the interdependence of men and women.

The two strategic goals for this strategy should thus be first, the equal sharing of power between men and women at all levels; and second, the systematic integration of the gender perspective in policy-making and programme implementation in all areas and at all levels.

These two mutually reinforcing strategic goals will reflect the empowerment of women through their access to decision-making at all levels and will also be a means for progressively enhancing and expanding such empowerment. The strategic goals will thus affect the very nature and tenor of human development and the quality and scope of gender relations in the future.

Sustainable development can only be built by establishing an equitable partnership between men and women and by incorporating the needs, interests and vision of women in the design, formulation, implementation, evaluation and readjustment of development policies, strategies and programmes.

The Platform for Action should therefore identify actions to respond to the practical needs of the majority of women which will be steps towards the attainment of their strategic goals. The action steps should be divided into short-, medium- and long-term plans, allowing countries to advance coherently according to their specific priorities, starting points and capabilities.

Political, economic and social changes currently taking place in the international, regional and national arenas require a new framework for establishing priority areas for intervention. The economic restructuring taking place in most countries of the world has had a negative impact on women's status, with a consequent widening of the gender gap. Structural adjustment policies and market-oriented development strategies in developing countries and

in formerly centrally planned economies are marginalizing women from the most dynamic sectors and contributing to widespread poverty.

In the international sphere, emerging geopolitical relations, the globalization of the economy, international migration and the forced displacement of populations within and across national borders, as a result of wars or famines, call for a greater involvement of women in world governance and in international bodies and structures, in particular in those dealing with security, peacemaking and peace-keeping, trade and industry, finance, scientific and technological research, development and transfer, and international cooperation.

Measures should be adopted at the regional level that allow women to participate actively in building and shaping regional and subregional economic integration efforts, and in strengthening horizontal links of cooperation for combating common problems.

At the national level, a real democratization process should ensure that women are fully represented in all political structures and in the whole range of social organizations and interest groups, particularly trade unions and employers' organizations. Policies should aim at redressing gender imbalances in access to economic resources and social services, and should provide for a more efficient allocation of public expenditure and a more effective redistribution of the benefits of economic growth.

A new ethic for development thus calls for a restructuring of our institutions and of our society. It calls for women's access to political, economic and social power on equal footing with men, as the best means for ensuring that gender equality will be automatically promoted and safeguarded in the long run. It is also the key for reshaping the development agenda from its very essence, for the benefit of not only women but society as a whole. The representatives of the 28 agencies presenting this statement are committed to improving the terms of women's involvement in development.

PRACTICAL IMPERATIVES

Women are active participants in the development of the societies in which they live, although their contributions are often neither recognized nor paid and they are often prevented from reaping the benefits of their contributions.

Although the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and many other legal instruments have delineated the important legal changes that must be made, many obstacles remain. Too many countries continue to have legal codes which bar women from inheriting property on the same basis as men; controlling their own income, savings and other financial assets; owning land outright in their own name; or even signing independent contracts. Moreover, even where adequate laws concerning the physical and sexual assault of women are in place, all too often they are not enforced.

Some countries continue to restrict women's ability to travel freely and independently, either within their own countries or internationally.

Women and girls continue to be denied equal access to education, including technical and vocational training, from primary school to university, with the result that women's illiteracy remains at an intolerable level and continues to be a major obstacle to women's full and equal participation in the paid labour market. Women continue to have more difficulty than men in obtaining credit, small business development aid and other financial and technical assistance. Few, if any, countries ensure adequate provision of child care to enable the parents of young children to work, leaving women with an unequal responsibility to take on that role. When women work in the formal sector, they are often ignored by trade unions, despite the overwhelming need for women to engage in collective bargaining to improve their salaries and working conditions, whether in industry or the service sector.

Sustainable development can only be achieved with the full participation of healthy women. Thus, it is essential to establish gender-sensitive programmes that address women's health throughout their life cycles. Both prevention and care programmes must be integrated into nutrition, reproductive health and family planning, as well as into services addressing sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. Efforts must be made to ensure women's access to and increased utilization of quality health services. Violence in the home and in society has a devastating impact on women's physical and mental health. Care and support services for those suffering from the consequences of domestic violence and rape must be integrated into health-care services.

It is therefore imperative that the needs, interests and contributions of women of all ages form an integral part of all issues of development, including health, population, education, agriculture, employment, industry, trade, transport, communication, environment and drug-abuse demand reduction, as well as in the implementation of refugee and humanitarian assistance programmes. In all these areas, women must be involved at all levels of programme development, from design to evaluation, including the negotiation of the terms under which such programmes will operate. As important as this is in general, it becomes even more important in societies affected by wars, civil strife, droughts and other natural disasters, as well as the mass migration of their people, especially as refugees.

MECHANISMS

Three mechanisms for achieving strategic goals and meeting the practical imperatives have been identified:

1. Development and analysis of statistics, research and information

Statistics are an important tool for advocacy for women, which help draw attention to the situation of women and how it differs from men's and also help formulate the policies and programmes needed for change. The adequacy of statistics and information available on women at the national, regional and international levels should be assessed and steps should be taken to collect and analyse the necessary data and make it accessible to users. In this connection, The World's Women a/ has played an important role, for it is a compact source of

information, a tool for advocacy for women and also provides a core set of statistical indicators for national gender reports. High priority should also be placed on research to develop indicators and information on such policy-related concerns as poverty, the economic contribution of women and violence against women, on which little data are now available.

2. Mobilization of people, organizations and institutions

The key to empowering women and bridging the gender gap between men and women and boys and girls lies in mobilizing people, through organizations and institutions, to engage in advocacy, in the implementation of strategic objectives and in monitoring their attainment. Women's organizations, including grass-roots women's groups, professional associations, non-governmental organizations and women's networks, play a vital role by forming the core of advocacy and pressure groups, in association with strategic allies and networks. The role of national machineries and other official structures established for the advancement of women should be re-examined and redefined in the light of the new and emerging realities at national, regional and international levels. The growing role of non-governmental organizations as advocates and agents of equality between women and men should be recognized and supported.

3. Mobilization of public and private sector resources

To achieve the vision of equitable development, with women as key players in leadership and decision-making roles, it is necessary to marshall resources towards achieving goals set within time-bound targets. This would involve the reallocation of public and private sector resources from gender-biased to gender-responsive investments, as well as a redeployment of resources from armaments to areas of social development, with special emphasis on women's health and education. Emphasis should be placed on supporting low-cost, high-impact, community-based initiatives that meet the basic needs of women and girls, as well as allocating sufficient resources to reduce gender disparities in mainstream programmes.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Inter-agency Meeting calls for the strengthening of accountability systems for the integration of women in development. The group notes with disappointment the continued treatment of women's issues and women's development as the concern and responsibility of women alone, and therefore urges that specific accountability measures be built directly into the Platform for Action. Accountability not only requires realistic measurable goals, it requires the adoption of enforcement mechanisms.

Ultimately, the most effective "gender watch" is an informed public. Therefore, efforts must be made to enhance the gender dimension of important international advocacy tools, such as the UNDP Human Development Report and the World Bank Report. Moreover, as we prepare for the Fourth World Conference on Women, it is crucial that we effectively mobilize mass media and make optimal use of technological advances in communication to ensure that our message

reaches the widest possible audience. Essential to this effort will be the non-governmental organizations who have the best track record in reaching people at the grass-roots level and mobilizing public opinion. Therefore, the Inter-agency Meeting unanimously encourages the Commission to include non-governmental organizations with proven expertise in the advancement of women in all aspects of Conference preparations and ensure that they are duly represented at the official meeting in Beijing.

In closing, the representatives of the 28 organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system would like to warmly welcome the Secretary-General of the Conference, Gertrude Mongella, and they look forward to working with her as they travel together to Beijing.

Women everywhere have a stake in the World Conference. The representatives wish to reaffirm that the Chairperson and the Commission can rely fully on the agencies represented in this statement to seize all opportunities to cooperate and support their efforts to ensure the success of the World Conference in Beijing.

Notes

a/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.3.

Annex IV

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTEENTH AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON WOMEN

1. Opening of the meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Programming and coordination matters related to the United Nations and United Nations system.

4. Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.

5. Preparation of reports:

   (a) Preparation of a report on priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women:

      (i) Equality: equality in economic decision-making;

      (ii) Development: promotion of literacy, education and training, including technological skills;

      (iii) Peace: women in international decision-making;

   (b) Input to reports for priority themes for the fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women:

      (i) Equality: elimination of stereotyping of women in the mass media;

      (ii) Development: child and dependent care, including sharing of work and family responsibilities;

      (iii) Peace: education for peace;

   (c) Preparations for a General Assembly report on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

6. Operational activities.

7. Preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

8. Other matters.

9. Adoption of the report.